

XVI.—*Notices of recent Ornithological Publications.*

16. *Milne-Edwards and Grandidier's 'Madagascar.'*

[Histoire Physique, Naturelle et Politique de Madagascar, publiée par Alfred Grandidier. Vol. xiii. Histoire Naturelle des Oiseaux par MM. Alph. Milne-Edwards et Alf. Grandidier. Tom. ii. Atlas.—1, 1^{re} partie. 4to: Paris, 1876. Imprimerie Nationale.]

Of this extensive undertaking, which, when completed, will embrace no less than twenty-eight large 4to volumes, we have as yet only seen one of the livraisons relating to the Birds. This is the first part of the Atlas, containing seventy plates, coloured and uncoloured. While the osteological and anatomical plates are very good, we cannot say so much in favour of the coloured lithographs, which are stiff and unnatural. The portrait of *Eutriorchis astur* is an exception, being the production of Mr. Keulemans's talented pencil. They represent the following species:—

Coracopsis obscura, C. nigra.	Accipiter madagascariensis.
Psittacula madagascariensis.	Asio capensis major, A. madagascariensis.
Haliaetus vociferoides.	Athene superciliaris.
Eutriorchis astur.	Scops menadensis.
Falco zoniventris, F. concolor.	Coua serriana, C. reynaudii, C. cristata, C. pyropyga, C. verreauxi, C. cærulea, C. delalandii, C. gigas, C. ruficeps, C. olivaceiceps, C. cursor, C. coquereli.
Tinnunculus newtoni.	Cuculus poliocephalus.
Polyboroides radiatus.	Centropus madagascariensis.
Baza madagascariensis.	
Buteo brachypterus.	
Machæramphus andersoni.	
Circus macroscelus, C. maillardi.	
Astur hensti, A. francesi, A. morelii.	

We hope soon to be able to report upon the letterpress of this important work.

17. *Howard Saunders's 'Birds of Southern Spain.'*

[Catalogue des Oiseaux du Midi de l'Espagne. Par Howard Saunders, F.L.S., F.Z.S. Bull. Soc. Zool. de France, 1877.]

We have received a separate copy of Mr. Howard Saunders's "Catalogue of the Birds of Southern Spain," of which the concluding portion is contained in the 'Bulletin' of the

Société Zoologique de France for last year. As the latest *résumé* of the birds of this interesting part of Southern Europe, and as being drawn up by an authority on the subject so well known for his labours on the avifauna of Spain as the author, this memoir will, we are sure, be much appreciated. The total number of species included by Mr. Howard Saunders in his list is 339. Of these, three only, we believe, are peculiar to the Spanish peninsula—namely, *Gecinus sharpii*, *Calendrella bætica*, and *Cyanopica cooki**. As special reference is made by the author to nomenclature, we may remind him that he will find on referring to his dictionary that the correct name of the Robin is *Erithacus* (not *Erythacus*) and that the Greek word *Aedon* cannot be properly abbreviated into *Ædon*.

18. Brandt on Russian Zoological Works.

[Brevis Enumeratio operum ad faunam mammalium et avium Imperii Rossici pertinentium; auctore Alexandro Brandtio.]

A very useful catalogue of works relating to the mammals and birds of Russia, which, as the author observes, were imperfectly stated in Sclater's address on zoological literature given before the British Association at Bristol†.

19. Collett's Contributions to Norwegian Ornithology.

[Mindre Meddelelser vedrørende Norges Fuglefauna i Aarene 1873-76. Af Robert Collett. Nyt Mag. Naturv. Kristiania, 1877, pp. 85-225.]

A series of notes on the birds of Norway, from the pen of a well-known and excellent observer accustomed to field-work.

* In the new volume of his Catalogue (iii. p. 67) Mr. Sharpe uses *Cyanopolius* as the name for this genus, giving the date 1849. But if a reference is made to the Brit. Assoc. Report for that year (p. 75), as quoted, no such title will be found, the present species being there called simply *Pica cooki*. Mr. Sharpe has been misled by Bonaparte's quotation, P. Z. S. 1850, p. 86; but he should have recollected that Napoleonic assertions required to be verified!

† See Rep. Brit. Assoc. 1875, pt. ii. p. 85.

20. *Collett on New Norwegian Birds.*

[Om et Par for Norges Fauna nye Fuglearter. Af Robert Collett. Vid.-Selsk. Forh. Christiania, 1877.]

Mr. Collett introduces two new species to the Norwegian avifauna in this paper—*Motacilla melanope* of Pallas (killed near Bergen), and *Phylloscopus sibilatrix* (obtained near Laurvig.)

21. *Collett on two Collections from Madagascar.*

[Om et Par Fuglesamlinger fra Madagascar-Regionen, modtagne fra Aug. Lantz i 1867, og Missionslæge Borchgrevink i 1875. Af Robert Collett. Vid.-Selsk. Forh. Christiania, 1877.]

Gives an account of two small collections—one made by Capt. Aug. Lantz in Bourbon and Madagascar in 1867, and the other by Hr. Borchgrevink, a missionary, near Tamatave in 1875. Fifty-nine species are enumerated, and named after Dr. Hartlaub's 'Vögel Madagascars.' The prize in the two collections seems to have been a specimen of *Neodrepanis coruscans*.

22. *Oustalet on a new Sibia.*

[Description d'une espèce nouvelle du genre *Sibia* (*S. desgodinsi*) par M. E. Oustalet. Extrait du Bull. Soc. Philomat. de Paris, 7^e sér. t. i. no. 3, 1877.]

Sibia desgodinsi is among a small collection of mammals and birds obtained by M. Desgodins at Yer-ka-lo, on the upper Mekong, in 29° 3' 30" N. lat. It is nearest to *S. gracilis* of Assam.

23. *Salvadori's 'Prodromus,' Part iv.*

[Prodromus Ornithologiæ Papuasie et Moluccarum, auctore Thoma Salvadorio. IV. Bucerotidæ, Meropidæ, Alcedinidæ, Coraciidæ, Podargidæ, Caprimulgidæ, Cypselidæ. Annali del Mus. Civ. de St. Nat. di Genova, vol. x. (1877) pp. 299–312].

One Hornbill, 38 Kingfishers, 4 Rollers, 9 Podargidæ, 4 Goatsuckers, and 3 Swifts are recognized as appertinent to the Papuan avifauna. *Tanysiptera obiensis*, from Obi (*Bernstein*), is described as new.

24. *Ernst on the Flora and Fauna of Venezuela.*

[Estudios sobre la Flora y Fauna de Venezuela por A. Ernst. 4to: Caracas, 1877.]

This series of memoirs of Dr. Ernst, of Caracas—so far as we know, the only representative of biological science in his adopted country—contains a nominal list of the birds of Venezuela, compiled principally from Sclater and Salvin's joint papers on the birds collected in that Republic by Hr. Goering and by Mr. Spence: 556 species are enumerated. Much revision is necessary before the list can be considered as accurate, species having been introduced on the authority of Burmeister's 'Thiere Brasiliens' and Gray's 'Hand-list.'

25. *Spence's 'Land of Bolivar.'*

[The Land of Bolivar, or War, Peace, and Adventure in the Republic of Venezuela. By James Mudie Spence, F.R.G.S. With Maps and Illustrations. 2 vols. 8vo. London: Sampson Low & Co. 1878.]

Mr. Spence's volumes contain much that is of interest to the naturalist concerning the varied and little-known Republic of Venezuela, which is so accessible from our shores, and yet attracts so few visitors. At the same time the greater part of the book is taken up by personal adventures, politics, and statistics. Mr. Spence reprints in his appendix the paper (published P. Z. S. 1873, p. 511) on the birds which he collected, and gives (vol. i. pp. 266, 267) woodcuts of the two new species, *Lochmias sororia** and *Crypturus cervini-ventris*, which we owe to his exertions.

26. *Malm's 'Fauna of Gothenburg and Bohusland.'*

[Göteborgs och Bohusläns Fauna. Rygggradsdjuren; af A. W. Malm. 8vo: Göteborg, 1877].

This volume gives us an account of the vertebrated animals

* Specimens of this species have since been acquired by Salvin and Godman from Columbia and Bolivia; and there can be little doubt that the bird from Peru, described by Dr. Cabanis as *L. obscurata* (J. f. Orn. 1873, p. 65), belongs to the same species. The latter name has priority over the one given by us.—EDD..]

of the Swedish seaboard-provinces of Gotheborg and Bohuslen, from the pen of Dr. A. W. Malm. The birds occupy about 200 pages, and 229 species are included. We do not quite understand why Dr. Malm has thought it necessary to rename *Turdus merula* "*Merula linnei*," *Cinclus aquaticus* "*Cinclus linnei*," *Troglodytes europæus* "*Troglodytes linnei*," and so forth in every case where Linnæus's specific name has been subsequently used as a generic term. Some names, such as "*Phyllopsneustes*" and "*Tarrhaleus*," are obviously misspelt.

27. Rowley's '*Ornithological Miscellany*,' Parts x. to xiii.

Since our last notice of Mr. Rowley's work, four parts have been issued. On home ornithology Mr. Rowley has penned articles on the following subjects:—on *Saxicola ænanthe*, illustrated with a plate, showing the form of trap employed on the South Downs for catching these birds; on Scoulton Mere and the Black-headed Gull (*Larus ridibundus*) (several plates show different views of this interesting mere); on Flamborough Head (also illustrated by four plates, of the cliffs and their inhabitants); on Sussex Heronries; and on *Cotyle riparia*. Mr. Rowley's contributions to exotic ornithology are also numerous. We have a continuation of the series of articles on the Birds of the Fiji Islands, with plates of *Myiolestes macrorhynchus*, Layard, and *Pachycephala torquata*, Layard. Figures are also given, accompanied by short accounts, of *Phainoptila melanozantha*, Salv., *Odontophorus cinctus*, Salv., *Geotrygon costaricensis*, Lawr., *Chlorænas subvinacea*, Lawr., *Geotrygon rufiventris* and *Leptoptila cassini*, Lawr., *Machæirhynchus nigripectus*, Schl., and *Domicella coccinea* (Lath.).

Mr. Rowley also continues his notes (or rather Dr. Meyer's) on the genus *Ptilopus*, and figures *P. miqueli* and *P. musschenbroeki*. He has also an article on the genus *Cittura*, and figures the females of *C. cyanotis* and *C. sanghirensis*. Here, too, Dr. Meyer has contributed much valuable information. We are also glad to see the conclusion of the translation of Col. Prejevalski's '*Birds of Mongolia*,' instalments of which

have appeared in each part for some time past. Of other contributions to Mr. Rowley's journal we have some notes by Mr. Selater on the genus *Pionus*, with figures of *P. corallinus* and *P. tumultuosus*; Mons. Boucard gives an account of *Pharomacrus costaricensis*, Mr. J. H. Gurney, Jun., notes on Flamborough Head; and Dr. Meyer describes two new species of birds from the Malay archipelago, viz.:—*Zeocephus rowleyi*, from the Sangi Islands, and *Surniculus musschenbroeki*, from Batchian.

28. *D. G. Elliot's Descriptions of new Species of Birds.*

[Ann. & Mag. Nat. Hist. ser. 5, vol. i. pp. 85, 98].

In the January number of the 'Annals' Mr. Elliot has two papers, describing as many new species of birds, from specimens in the Paris Museum. The first of these relates to a new *Anthracoceros*, from Cochin China, which he calls *A. fraterculus*. He recognizes four species of this genus, the diagnostic characters of which are given. In the second a new species of *Porphyrio*, called *P. edwardsi*, is characterized. It, too, is from Cochin China, its nearest ally being stated to be *P. poliocephalus* of India.

29. *Prof. Barboza du Bocage on West-African Birds.*

[Aves das possessões portuguezas d'Africa occidental. Por J. V. Barboza du Bocage, Decima quarta lista: Jorn. Scien. Math. Ph. e Nat. Lisb. xxii. pp. 142-150. Decima quinta lista: pp. 151-157. Mélanges Ornithologiques: pp. 158-161.]

These papers are in continuation of the series that Prof. Bocage has published from time to time, in which he has described the various collections received by him from the Portuguese possessions in West Africa, the greater part of them despatched by Senhor Anchieta from Angola. Amongst other matter we notice that under the head of *Bucorax cafer* Prof. Bocage draws attention to a supposed error of Mr. Elliot's in his determination of the figures of *Bucorax cafer* and *B. guineensis*, published in the Zoological Society's 'Proceedings' for 1873; and he further suggests that the species recently described by Mr. Elliot (*cf. anteà*, p. 113) as *B. pyrrhops* is the adult of *B. guineensis*. Of scarce species we

observe amongst others *Stactolæma anchietæ*, four specimens of which are in the collection obtained in Caconda by the energetic collector whose name it bears.

The new species (all from Angola) in these collections are described, as follows :—*Hirundo nigrorufa*, allied to *H. dimidiata*; *Elminia albicauda*; *Drymæca angolensis*; *Sylvietta rufescens*; and *Parus rufiventris*.

30. G. N. Lawrence on the Birds of Dominica.

[A Provisional List of the Birds procured and noticed by Mr. Fred. A. Ober in the Island of Dominica. Forest and Stream, Dec. 6, 1877.]

In our last number (*antèd*, p. 103) we noticed a paper by Mr. Lawrence on the new species of birds obtained by Mr. Ober in the West-Indian island of Dominica, we now have a provisional list of 56 species obtained in the island up to the present time. When Mr. Ober's exploration of Dominica is concluded, we are promised a complete catalogue of its birds, in which will be incorporated the collector's notes. Besides the new species already noticed, there are several in this list we shall be glad to hear more about, especially those whose names are here simply given as new "varieties," such as *Vireosylvia calidris*, var. *dominicana*, and *Strix flammea*, var. *nigrescens*. Mr. Ober has not yet succeeded in obtaining specimens of all the birds he has heard of in the island. Besides the magnificent *Chrysotis augusta*, a second species of Parrot (no. 33) is said to be found, the determination of which would be very interesting. The "Diablotin" (no. 56) will probably prove to be *Æstrelata hæsitata*, specimens of which, obtained by L'Herminier in the not distant island of Martinique, are now in the Paris Museum.

31. M. A. Milne-Edwards on the Affinities of the Genus *Phodilus*.

[Observations sur les Affinités Zoologiques du genre *Phodilus* par M. Alph. Milne-Edwards. Compt. Rend. Dec. 1877.]

The genus *Phodilus* has hitherto been placed by almost all ornithologists in the same group of Owls as *Strix*, to which genus it undoubtedly bears a great external resemblance. An examination of the skeleton negatives this view; and M.

Milne-Edwards proves that its real affinities are undoubtedly with *Syrnium*, in the Bubonine section of the family Strigidae, and that its resemblance to *Strix* is quite superficial.

32. *M. A. Milne-Edwards on a new Genus of Owls from Madagascar.*

[Sur un nouveau genre d'oiseau de proie nocturne provenant de Madagascar. Par M. Alph. Milne-Edwards. Compt. Rend. Dec. 1877.]

The new genus here characterized by Prof. Milne-Edwards under the name of *Heliodilus* is shown by its osteological characters to belong to the Strigine section of the Owls, being related to *Strix*, but separable by characters pointed out in this paper. The species, procured at Tamatave, is also new, and is described in a footnote by M. A. Grandidier as *H. soumagnei*, after its discoverer.

33. 'Bulletin' of the Nuttall Ornithological Club.

The January number of this journal contains several interesting papers, relating chiefly to the birds of the North-American continent.

Dr. Elliott Coues gives a note on *Passerculus bairdi* and *P. princeps*, the former of which is figured.

Mr. W. H. Henshaw has a paper on the genus *Passerella*, in which he shows that the four supposed species, *P. iliaca*, *P. townsendi*, *P. schistacea*, and *P. megarhyncha*, though easily distinguishable in specimens selected from the area of their maximum divergence, in reality pass insensibly into one another in intermediate localities.

Mr. W. A. Cooper gives notes on the breeding-habits of *Carpodacus purpureus*, var. *californicus*, with a description of its nest and eggs.

Mr. Ridgway describes a new Wren from the Tres Marias Islands. This bird is called *Thryothorus felix* β . *lawrencii*, its nearest ally being *T. felix* of the mainland of W. Mexico. From the form of nomenclature used for this bird, we conclude that Mr. Ridgway considers it a "variety" of *T. felix*, in other words, an imperfectly segregated species. Differential characters, however, are given, and no mention is made of

intermediate links to connect it with *T. felix*. Moreover the bird has a distinct island habitat, which renders it very unlikely that intermediate forms exist. That it is "clearly derivative from the mainland species" does not preclude its being a distinct species, which we suspect it really is.

Mr. W. H. Henshaw returns to the discussion respecting *Selasphorus alleni*, and endeavours to show that he was right in bestowing a name upon the green-backed *Selasphorus*, using *S. rufus* (Gm.) for the well-known rufous-backed form. Mr. Elliot, holding the opposite view, has renamed the rufous-backed bird *S. henshawi*. The whole point turns upon Latham's description in the 'General Synopsis' (i. p. 785), as from it Gmelin framed his diagnosis. One of Latham's characters, "between the wings a greenish gloss," supports to some extent the view that he had the green-backed bird before him. This, however, is quite set aside a little further on when the *green back* of the female is compared with the *rufous back* of the male. Swainson's testimony (F. B.-Am. ii. p. 496) is entirely in favour of Latham's bird being the rufous-backed form. He describes a specimen in his own possession, which he bought from Bullock, who had it from Sir Joseph Banks, who probably received it from some one who accompanied Cook in his last voyage*. This specimen was doubtless a typical one. The peculiarity of the range of the two forms appears capable of being accounted for by viewing the northern rufous-backed bird to be a migratory species spending its summers in Western America north of California, and its winters in the Mexican highlands. On the other hand the Californian *S. alleni* is probably nearly sedentary, or, at all events, performs no such lengthened migration as its near ally. On the whole we think Mr. Henshaw right in his view of the question.

Mr. William Brewster has an article on the first plumage of a number of American birds; and he is followed by Mr. J. A. Allen, who criticises Mr. Wallace's 'Theory of Birds' Nests,' to show its inadequacy as applied to the birds of the

* [I have searched for this specimen in the Swainson Collection at Cambridge, but have not succeeded in finding it.—O. S.]

North-American continent. Exceptions to a theory like Mr. Wallace's cannot but be numerous; and it would be unreasonable to expect otherwise. But we doubt much if the exceptions so preponderate as to leave no ground for believing in the existence of a substratum of truth in the suggestions Mr. Wallace has put forward to account for the peculiarities of the nidification of the many birds that certainly do conform to the generalizations he has laid down.

Amongst the "General Notes" (p. 37) Mr. Ridgway adds the three following Palæarctic birds to the North-American fauna—*Parus cinctus*, *Syrnium lapponicum*, and *Surnia uhula*, specimens of all of which were obtained at St. Michael's, Norton Sound, Alaska, by Mr. Lucien M. Turner, together with a considerable number of other skins.

34. *Godwin-Austen on new Birds from the Naga Hills and Assam.*

[Descriptions of supposed new Birds from the Naga Hills and Eastern Assam. By Lt.-Col. H. H. Godwin-Austen. Ann. & Mag. Nat. Hist. ser. 4, vol. xx. p. 519.]

The two new birds described in this paper are *Turdinus nagaënsis*, from the Eastern Naga hills, an ally of *T. garoënsis*; and *Staphidia plumbeiceps*, from Sadya, Eastern Assam, a close ally of *S. torqueola*, Swinh.

XVII.—*Letters, Announcements, &c.*

We have received the following letters, addressed to the Editors of 'The Ibis':—

GENTLEMEN,—In the number of 'The Ibis' for April 1877, which has just reached me, there is a "Note on two Birds from the Fiji Islands," by Count Salvadori, in which he shows that my name for the little *Rhipidura* of those islands cannot stand, and he does me the honour to rename it after me. I thank him for his kindness, and am quite ready to accept his dictum in this case. As is well known to you, my wandering life has precluded my carrying about a library; and I am always ready to give way in matters of nomenclature.

With respect, however, to my statement that the colo-